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place as supernatural or dwarfish beings is evident from the great amount of valuable and interesting material which Mr. MacRitchie has collected.

Mr. MacRitchie has been accused, unjustly we presume, of deriving all belief in fairies from the existence of small prehistoric races. What he has really done has been to show very clearly that a vast amount of popular faith among Norsemen, British Celts, and others, in certain supernatural beings, was actually derived from this source. There are certainly other roots of the belief; thus the French *fée* is derived from the Latin *fatum*, — a kind of guardian spirit, always a woman, not generally diminutive.

Charles G. Leland.

VOLKSGLAUBE UND RELIGIÖSER BRAUCH DER SÜDSLAVEN. Vorwiegend nach eigenen Ermittlungen. Von Dr. FRIEDRICH S. KRAUSS. Aschendorffsche Buchhandlung. Münster (Westphalia). 1890. 8vo, xvi., 176.

This latest work of Dr. Krauss is one of the series of treatises on the non-Christian religions of the world now being published by the Aschendorff Company in Münster, Westphalia, and is unquestionably one of the most important contributions to the study of the primitive beliefs of modern Europe. By the South Slavs are meant the people of Servia, Bulgaria, Croatia, Bosnia, and Slavonia, along the Lower Danube, the greater portion of whom have been for centuries subjected to the dominion of an Asiatic barbarism which has effectually checked progress, and preserved the superstitions and usages of the Dark Ages. The author has already established a reputation by his researches in this special field, and brings to the task a quick sympathy, a tireless energy, and a lifelong acquaintance with the country and the language of the people he describes.

The several chapters of the work treat respectively of sun, moon, and star beliefs, the fates, tree souls, disease spirits, the plague demons, the vilas or fairies, witches, dwarfs and giants, death fetishes, and sacrifices. There appears to be no true sun or moon cult, although the heavenly bodies have a prominent place in the folk-lore of the people. Especially is this the case in the numerous wedding songs, where the bride is always represented as the morning star, while the bridegroom appears as the sun or moon. We find the familiar beliefs in regard to the influence of the moon upon the crops, together with the well-known stories concerning the man in the moon, in addition to other myths which may be peculiar to the region. In Slavonia the man in the moon is a Gypsy blacksmith, with hammer and tongs in his hands, and his anvil by his side. Were he not there, the moon would be as warm and bright as the sun. Some see in the spots the face of the holy Saint Matthew, while others make them out to be a horse's head.

The Fates (*Rozdanica*) are three white-robed sisters who dwell in some unknown mountain wilderness. They appear at the midnight hour by the cradle of the new-born infant, pronounce its life destiny, and are gone. The youngest speaks first, the second softens or makes harsher the decree, and the eldest gives the final decision from which there is no appeal. They determine how long the infant shall live, when and how he shall die,

what shall be his trade, his wealth, or his poverty, and when and whom he shall marry. To gain their favor and secure a propitious oracle, bread, salt, and some pieces of money are left in the cradle beforehand for each of the three sisters. The belief does not seem to be borrowed from the classic mythology, but is evidently a survival of the primitive universal religion.

Trees are frequently the prison-houses of guilty souls whose sins have barred them out of Paradise for a time. The souls of unbaptized infants also are sometimes thus imprisoned, and the legend tells of one child-spirit that was condemned to such lonely exile for "thirty-three years, thirty-three days, thirty-three hours, and thirty-three minutes." The most curious part of this belief is that throughout all this time the imprisoned soul retains its human thought and feeling, and should the tree be cut down the soul dies. The sacrilegious woodcutter, however, dies likewise, at once or after a lingering illness, unless he offers as a vicarious sacrifice a living hen, which he beheads upon the stump of the tree with the same axe which has done the work. This precaution is always taken when there is reason to suppose that the tree conceals a soul.

The whole theory and practice with regard to disease and medicine is strikingly like that of our own Indians. In fact it is practically identical, even to the mystic ceremonies and the construction of the formulas. In some respects the Slav formulas are really more elaborate, having drawn about equally from the Pagan and the Christian mythologies. In reading the description given by Krauss, it is almost impossible to realize that we are dealing with Europe, and not with Omahas or Cherokees. Sickness is commonly sent by disease spirits (*bolehčici*), women with long red-brown hair, who go from house to house and shoot disease arrows into men and animals alike. To propitiate these spirits, honey cakes and other offerings are brought in the darkness to a cross-road frequented by the ghosts, where the cakes are set down, the spirits are called to the feast, and the giver returns, happy in the assurance of their favor. All internal pains and diseases are due to the fact that a spirit hostile to the human race has taken up its residence in the body of the patient. The witch doctor first performs curious incantations with water and burning coals to determine whether the sickness is from God, the Devil, the fairies, the witches, or some other occult source. This question settled, other mystic ceremonies follow, with long formulas, with which the disease spirit, "conceived without father, born without mother, baptized by no priest," is driven from the threshold and banished "where sun never shines, where cock never crows, where a cow never lows, where a sheep never bleats, and where man prays never to God," to disappear "like the clouds in the heavens, like the dewdrops on the grass."

Pestilence is the work of three terrible spirit sisters, who devour the flesh of their victims. They are small in stature, without nose or ears, with the eyes of a snake, the claws of a cat, and the hoofs of a goat. Long years ago, there was a king who lived seven years with his queen and then killed her because she bore him no children. Seven wives he married in succes-

sion, and each shared the same fate at the end of seven years. When the last one died no other woman would marry him, until one day, while hunting in the forest, he met a strange woman, whom he married and lived with three years, and by her had three daughters, all of whom were born with the hoofs of goats. The mother then told the king that she was an evil spirit, and immediately disappeared. In his anger the king shut up his three children in a dungeon, from which they finally escaped, and at once began to devour his people. The pestilence was loose in the land. The people died by hundreds day after day, and no skill could save them, until at last only the king was left alive. Then the whole kingdom sank down into the earth, and where it once was is now a deep ocean. The three plague sisters betook themselves to other lands, each to a separate continent, and continue forever their work of death. If the three ever meet again in the same country, they will destroy each other and pestilence will cease.

There are interesting chapters also on giants, dwarfs, witches, and sacrifices; but we can only notice briefly the vilas, the fairies of the Slavs. The vilas are tree-souls which have broken from their woody prisons and assumed visible shape. They resemble maidens of wondrous beauty, with bright, clear countenance and slender figure, and clothed only with their long dark or golden hair, which falls in thick masses to their feet. Should a single hair be lost, the vila dies. They move through the air on invisible wings, which are put on or off at will.

The book deserves the careful study of every ethnologist.

James Mooney.

MEHMED'S BRAUTFAHRT (Smailagic Meho), ein Volksepos der südslavischen Mohammedaner. Aufgezeichnet von Dr. F. S. KRAUSS; deutsch von CARL GRÖBER. Wien, Hölder. 1890. 16mo, pp. 130.

"Mehmed's Bridal Journey" belongs to that special kind of popular epics called guslar songs, which seem now limited to the Southern Slavs of the Mohammedan creed south of the Danube. The literary world has become more extensively acquainted with this highly interesting sort of epics through the folk-lorist Dr. F. S. Krauss, who in 1884 was detailed by the late Archduke Rudolf to make a thorough study of South-Slavic folk-lore, and succeeded in taking down over one hundred and ninety thousand verses of oral literature. The original Slavic text of the "Bridal Journey" was communicated to him by a guslar eighty-five years old, and he lost no time in publishing it, with ample scientific annotations, at Pretner's publication office, Ragusa, 1886. The troubadours of that country (Bosnia, Hercegovina, etc.) are called guslars, from the gusla, a one-chorded violin serving to accompany the trochaic, uniformly five-footed verses which make up these historic songs. Although these epics are naïve productions of untutored minds, many of them contain beautiful passages of unexpectedly high value, and these are heightened by the sonorous and graphic qualities of the Slavic dialect in which they are composed. Their length is very different; the Orlović, formerly published by Krauss in Slavonic and German,